

Meriden Parish Council

The Centre of England

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 30th April 2018
Venue: Pavilion, Meriden Sports Park at 7.30 p.m.

Present:

Cllr R Weaver RW	Chair	Cllr F Lynch-Smith FLS	
Cllr M Lee ML		Cllr J Barber JB	
Cllr P Lee PL		Cllr M Haque MH	
Mrs B Bland	Clerk		

1. Welcome & Apologies

Apologies received from Cllr Kipling due to work commitments and Cllr M Nunn due to a personal commitment.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members accepted apologies from Cllr Kipling and Cllr Nunn.

2. Public Participation

There were no members of the public in attendance.

3. Declarations of Interest

3a To declare any personal interests in items on the agenda and their nature.
Nothing to declare.

3b To declare any prejudicial interests in items on the agenda and their nature
Nothing to declare.

4. Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 19th March 2018, circulated prior to meeting, were considered for accuracy and agreed.

IT WAS RESOLVED The minutes of the meeting held on 19th March 2018 were approved; proposed by Cllr M Lee and seconded by Cllr M Haque.

5. Finance

(Finance Committee Recommendations):-

5.1 Finance Committee met on 25th April 2018 for the purpose of approving April payments due to Parish Council being held on 30th April 2018. Therefore under delegated powers Finance Committee approved April payments as follows:-

- Meriden Parish Council April payments £7,896.86.

IT WAS RESOLVED Cllr M Lee proposed approval of finance committee recommendation for Meriden Parish Council April payments of £7,896.86 seconded by Cllr M Haque.

- Meriden Sports Park April payments £5,073.90.

IT WAS RESOLVED Cllr M Lee proposed approval of finance committee recommendation for Meriden Sports Park April payments of £5,073.90 seconded by Cllr P Lee.

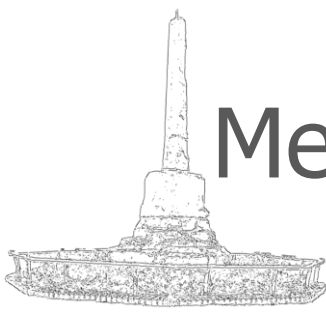
Signed Chair **Dated**

Clerk: Barbara Bland

55 James Dawson Drive, Millisons Wood, Coventry, CV5 9QJ

T: 01676 522474 M: 07767 162423 E: barbarablandmpc@btconnect.com

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- Year End Reconciliation Qtr 4

Members acknowledged the finance committee internal checks on quarter 4 reconciliation including invoices, bank statements and Edge management system.

- GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) Audit

Clerk advised all Members were emailed with the GDPR audit of 26th April. Chair reminded Members that the parish council agreed to engage DM Payroll Services to provide Data Protection Officer controls to enable compliance. Members considered the content and recommendation for a working party to be set up. Chair reported that NALC had lobbied local government to take on the role of Data Protection Officer for smaller Parish and Town Councils without success. It is widely accepted that this new regulation will be a work in progress and if work commences before the implementation date of 25th May 2018 then organisations are considered compliant. Cllr Barber stated he wished to be part of the working party.

- HMRC New Reference for VAT126 Claim

Chair advised a letter received from HMRC notifying the parish council has a new reference number to be used when claiming VAT refund.

IT WAS RESOLVED It was resolved that Members unanimously approved finance committee recommendations and acknowledged the work of the group.

6. **Progress Reports**

6.1 Village Hall Management Committee
Nothing to report.

6.2 War Memorials

Cllr M Lee advised that a meeting with Caroline Stockham, Solicitor, SMBC, representing the parish council, had taken place with a view to PC Solicitor contacting the PCC and their Legal representatives. A letter of engagement from Caroline Stockham had been received detailing content of work with an hourly rate of £67.00; a provision of 4-6 hours has been suggested.

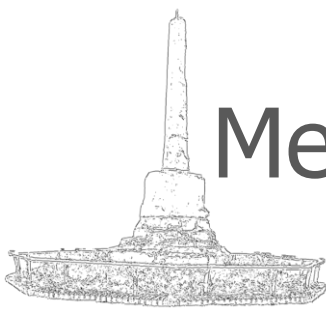
Action: Clerk to write to Ms Stockham confirming acceptance of letter of engagement terms.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members approved Parish Council Solicitor as Ms C Stockham, SMBC Legal Team to act on their behalf in all aspects of the War Memorial transfer. Proposed Cllr R Weaver and seconded Cllr M Lee.

Chair advised that she and the clerk had met SMBC drainage officer on site to determine state of drainage and flows. There will be some maintenance works required to desilt and clear away debris from old Victorian ditch system. Tree work is also needed and a meeting with SMBC Tree Officer to determine TPO's and dead

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trees for felling. Other scoping works will include looking at a more accessible entrance and repairs to stone walling.

Cllr P Lee stated the PCC have decided to give the War Memorial away with considerable maintenance works required; of which the financial implications will fall to the parish council. Cllr M Lee advised that the PCC proposal included for all their legal costs to be met by the parish council, of which the War Memorial Fund would be transferred to offset both sides costs, but it must be recognised that there will be a shortfall to be made up by the parish council. Members considered this to be unfair given the cost of bringing the War Memorial up to an accessible standard. Chair stated funding would be sourced for maintenance, tree and grounds work. Cllr P Lee vociferously defended the War Memorial not being a “quick fix” but any works carried out with external funding to be a sustainable model to be handed onto future generations. The clerk agreed and reaffirmed this is what any bid and secured funds will be used to provide. Cllr P Lee also stated he did not agree with any funding supporting the Cyclists Memorial as well; each Memorial site including the stained glass windows in St Laurence Church to be scoped separately. He further added that having attended a Monuments Briefing session with Cllr Jo Hooke, Fillongley PC, contact should be made for her assistance with a funding application, which she was happy to share.

Action: Clerk to source advisors/contractors for maintenance/restoration of Memorial, tree works, grounds work and repairs to stone walling; also to contact Monuments Trust and Heritage Lottery for funding criteria guidelines and application pack.

6.2(i) Heritage Monuments & Memorial Funding

Referred to under cover of item 6.2 above.

6.3 Meriden Pool

Chair advised that she and BB had met with SMBC and Murlac Contractor regarding phase 1 of the pool renovation project. Communication by SMBC has been poor which has caused the local community to be anxious and angry at the work and how this affects the remaining wildfowl. The clerk advised that after receiving a lot of complaints upon her return from leave, she contacted SMBC Head of Service. It was agreed that SMBC would put out an update which will include answers to the questions asked by residents; a copy of which had been circulated to Members. Signage has been placed on the safety fencing surround the Pool, parish council website, noticeboards and Library.

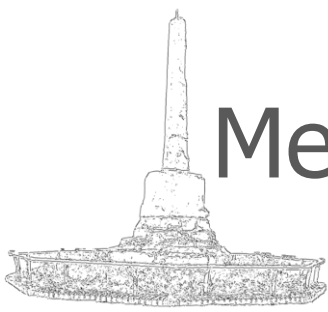
Action: Chair/Clerk to provide update for May meeting.

6.3(i) Red Kite Management Plan & Suez Funding

Nothing to report.

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6.4 Allotments

Clerk reported all going well. Cllr P Lee refuted this as he wished to understand the situation regarding allotment holders being asked to pay for a skip to remove rubbish. He was to speak to one tenant but needed to understand the situation prior to conversation. The clerk outlined a letter that was sent to all allotment holders along with their tenancy agreements and invoice for 2018-19 season. Basically a soft approach was used last year without success; after carrying out an allotment inspection it was apparent that some tenants were keeping their plots tidy and planting appropriately, with very little boundary rubbish; others were not and the thought was for a collective approach for all tenants to have use of a skip and work together to tidy up the site. Whilst this approach has not been popular and several tenants have put in written complaints, 60% of tenants have paid for the skip. To address the overgrowing boundaries that Taylor Wimpey are not maintaining, the parish council grounds work contactor has been engaged to undertake this work. Cllr P Lee thanked the clerk.

Action: Clerk to monitor and visit allotment site; Cllr P Lee to contact tenant who wished to speak to a Councillor.

6.5 Footpaths/Forum

Nothing to report.

6.6 Quarries Liaison Group

The next meeting is scheduled for 4th June 2018.

6.7 Solihull Area Committee

Chair reported an interesting meeting with John Crossling, County Officer and Alison Gregory WALC, providing an overview on the benefits of training, continued professional development for clerks and councillors, all relative to good practice and governance.

Discussed also was Berkswell and Balsall Common parish councils having full governance reviews by SMBC with a view to (i) merge, (ii) to separate and use HS2 line as a boundary or (iii) use SMBC District Councillors to de-parish requiring two 4 year cycles to de-parish. Members expressed their unhappiness with the suggestion of de-parishing and what this meant for other parishes in the future. Cllr P Lee suggests writing to SMBC that Meriden does not want to de-parish and wishes to distance themselves from any further discussion.

Chair confirmed that this was the sentiment of other parish councils and individuals should write to SMBC regarding the negative impact de-parishing will impose. NALC and WALC have written; as a statutory consultee the Chair of Balsall PC has written to Meriden.

Action: Chair to draft a letter to SMBC confirming Meriden's view on de-parishing by submission date 12th July 2018.

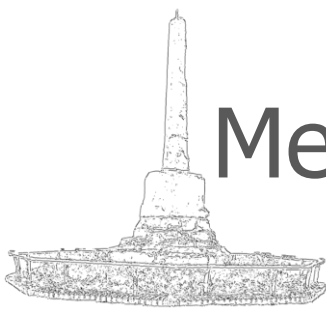
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6.8 Tree Wardens & TPO List

Nothing to report. Sarah Sharland continues with her work supporting the parish council with tree survey updates; she has also joined the Neighbourhood Planning group and leads on trees, butterflies and hedgehogs all of which will be featured in an article being written for the Meriden Mag.

6.9 Community Surgeries

Community Surgery 16th April 2018 - Pavilion

Facilitated by Barbara Bland with **2 residents in attendance.**

- Speeding traffic Hampton Lane and wider parish traffic management requirements. Also the disappointment that the portable speed signs trial has been shelved.
- **Action: BB to follow up with Davinder Chohan advising of new residents group and endorsing traffic management.**
- **HGV quarry lorries using Hampton Lane for last two weeks; it was unknown that the A45 Shepherds Lane route plan was closed due to resurfacing works. No notification received by parish council or residents.**

Action: BB to write to Ashley Prior requesting assistance with traffic calming initiatives for hotspots outlined in parish council report January 2018 with focus on Hampton Lane.

- Concerns raised regarding Bromford Housing tenants. Meeting to be held with Bromford Housing and residents later today.

Action: Meeting arranged to discuss current situation and explore selection process of tenants.

- The tree works on Birmingham Road, Millison's Wood have been left a dangerous condition; follow up inspection requested.

Action: Clerk to follow up with Bruce Brant.

6.10 Community Speed Watch

Nothing to report. Awaiting insurance.

6.11 HS2

Nothing to report.

6.12 Meriden Sports Park Quarterly Update

Chair provided a summary as follows:-

A busy period with bookings full in terms of football and cricket. 11 games were cancelled due to severe weather. Users include Junior Tennis (Wednesdays), Little Angels Parent & Toddler Group (Wednesdays), Cameo (monthly), Three Churches Café (2nd Friday monthly), Wildcats programme (7 girls attending), Health at Heart

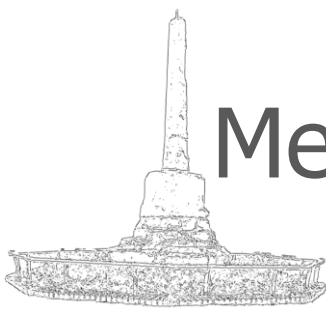
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started included boot camps and one:one patient sessions (Thursdays/Friday mornings/plus ad hoc). Agreed picnic in the park for 22nd July 2018 with Rachel Platt leading the event on behalf of sports park directors; event will include stalls, children’s entertainment and run from 12 noon to 4pm.

A quote has been received for outdoor table tennis equipment including ground work to infill petanque pit where tennis table will be sited. Biffa currently has funding available for such work and an application will be made for approximately 5K.

Sanding, slitting and seeding is programmed for May 2018; cutting back has been completed. SMBC drainage officer has agreed to inspect the underground tank and provide advice as to what is needed and if need be tanker out any water.

The Forest of Arden have agreed to provide a free boot camp weekly with trained instructors.

6.13 Meriden Sport & Recreation Trust Update

Cllr Lynch-Smith reported the Trust has been operating for two years; applications have been invited from local community groups to apply for funding for leisure activities, so far successful applicants are Scouts and Firebird Singers.

7. Clerk’s Report

No report is available; any items to be reported will be included in May’s clerks update.

8. District and Ward Councillor Reports

No District Councillors in attendance.

9. Correspondence & Communication

RW advised the following:-

- Meriden School PTA acknowledges receipt of £150 donation.
- Purchase Order acknowledgement from SMBC regarding precept including top up grant and 3.5% increase – all accepted and programmed for payments 1st April and 1st September 2018.
- Invitation and Chair’s decline to attend Investiture of Mayor.
- Article for Meriden Mag from Alan Lole regarding Funday Sunday advising this will be the last year on the Green; Members acknowledge content.
- Letter from Dame Caroline Spelman MP regarding Eaves Green residents complaints for lack of grit bins and Eaves Green Lane being put onto SMBC’s highways programme for gritting.

Action: Clerk to draft letter advising the lack of resources the parish council has to assist with this matter.

- SMBC May National Walking Month.
- Cyclists Memorial Service 21st May 2018.

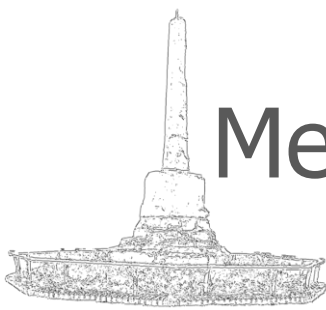
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10. Meriden Village Matters

10.1 Library Update

Nothing to report.

10.2 Village Commemoration WW1

Cllr M Lee reported a successful Meriden in the Great War Part II delivered by historian Doreen Agutter evening was well attended and raised £200 towards the Letitia Banks Grave renovation project. The Digby Trust has been contacted for additional funding. The next meeting of the WW1 Committee will be May 2018.

10.2(i) WW1 Poppy Memorial Site

Cllr M Lee is awaiting a quotation.

10.3 Meriden Gate

Clerk advised she had attended a meeting with residents and Bromford Housing. Bromford will be following up the issues outlined and will co-ordinate a further meeting to update. The parish council requested working with Bromford to ensure new tenants meet the "criteria". Chair advised she had included the issues in her meeting with SMBC CEO.

Action: Clerk to monitor.

10.4 Taylor Wimpey (Transfer of Allotments/freehold land)

Clerk advised she had emailed Taylor Wimpey reminding of the outstanding issues and requesting a meeting; reply awaited.

Action: Clerk, SMBC, Taylor Wimpey.

10.5 Highways

Nothing to report.

10.5(i) Grit Bins

Cllr P Lee advised he no longer had the time to carry out a "grit bin audit" to be fed into the bigger traffic management programme that Ashley Prior, Head of Highways, is working on. The parish council will need to pick this prior to onset of winter 2018-19 to ensure all bins are properly labelled and refilled for resident use.

Complaints from Eaves Green residents reported to MP (letter from Dame Caroline Spelman refers under item 9 communications), requests assistance from the parish council as SMBC have confirmed they are unable to include Eaves Green Lane on their scheduled gritting route. The parish council has finite resources and the cost of gritting Eaves Green Lane from parish budget is prohibitive.

Action: Clerk to contact Highways.

10.6 Land Registry & Ownership

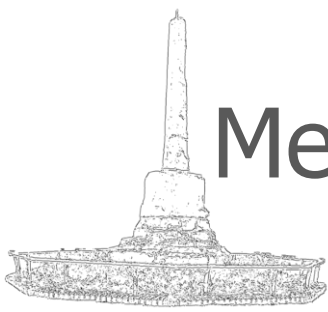
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Nothing to report.

10.7 Litter

Clerk advised that there has been no notification from the Scouts that they would like to be part of the **Great British Spring Clean**. Woodland View are keen to be part of this community initiative.

Action: Clerk to follow up with Scout Leader and Woodland View; suggestion early evening and possible weekend.

10.8 Mobile Mast Update

Nothing to report.

10.9 Local Council Award Scheme

Chair advised this remains a work in progress.

Action: ALL

10.10 Meriden Public Transport

Nothing to report.

10.11 Funday Sunday

Chair read an email from Event Organiser under item 9 communications.

11. Planning Matters

11.1 Neighbourhood Planning Update

Cllr M Lee reported the scheduled 25th April 2018 meeting was cancelled with 7 apologies received; the next meeting will be 16th May 2018 however she offered her apologies due to holiday and requested Cllr Weaver chair the meeting. Cllr Lee also advised that there is a clash now with SMBC planning committee and it may be that we need to shuffle the meetings to allow Cllr Bell to attend.

11.1(i) Locality Funding Bid

Cllr M Lee advised that she had undertaken a telephone interview with Locality and we should know in 15 days' time if Meriden's application for funding has been successful. As soon as we know we can start on the Housing Needs Survey.

Action: ML/RW/NP Steering Group.

11.2 Neighbourhood Community/Ward Action Plan

Nothing to report.

11.2(i) Highways Evidence

Nothing to report.

11.3 Solihull Local Plan Review

Nothing to report.

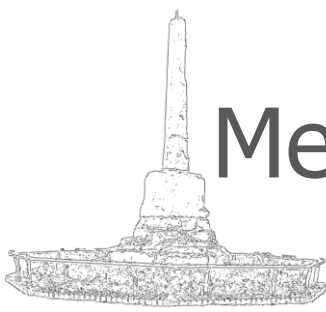
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11.4 Planning Application Status Updates

Cllr Nunn sent the following email to be included in the minutes regarding current status of planning applications in process as follows:-

PL/2018/00819/MINFHO

Tanglewood

Neighbour notification.

PL/2018/00953/PNAG

Alspath Hall farm,

No objection as it is agricultural.

PL/2018/00666/VAR

157 Main Rd

Object on the grounds that it detracts from the original design concept and materials used should be in-keeping with surrounding properties, aesthetics and landscaping.

Action: Cllr Nunn to place comments on SMBC planning portal.

11.4(1) Fairview

Chair advised receipt of a letter from Lawrence Osborne regarding parish complaint that information sent for the attention of planning committee had not included in Councillor planning packs or indeed read out to committee for inclusion at 31st January 2018 planning committee meeting. Basically the case officer had undertaken all legal checks within the timeline allowed for comments to be received and nothing had been recorded having been received from the parish council.

13. Parish Council Development Day

The suggested date of Sunday 10th June is to be rearranged. Chair will email Members with suggested dates; WALC has sent a "Self-Assessment Review" document so we measure performance, targets and achievement, forming the basis of content for the day.

Action: All

14. Annual Parish Assembly

Chair invited feedback from Members; Cllr Lynch-Smith reported a good attendance with 21 groups represented by 35 attendees including members of the public, plus Councillors. A good networking opportunity for all groups. Chair said the common thread of the evening was volunteers are needed and all groups struggle to recruit and sustain a volunteer team. The parish council will speak to Sustain with a view to co-ordinating volunteer engagement including a piece in the autumn edition of the Meriden Mag.

Action: Chair/Clerk to contact Sustain and organise meeting.

15. Contested Election 2019

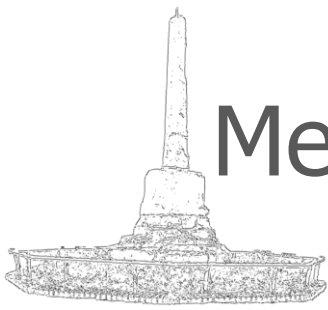
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Nothing to report.

16. Councillor's reports and items for future agenda

Nothing to report.

17. Date of Next Meeting

The next **Parish Council meeting** will be held on Monday 21st May 2018 at 7.30 pm
Venue: The Pavilion, Meriden Sports Park.

The meeting closed at 21.19 hours.

Signed Chair Dated

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